them in astronomical and literary pursuits, he entrusted to them the mapping of the Empire, he used them in negotiations with the Russians, and he assisted them in erecting a church in Peking and in rebuilding one in Hangchow. In 1692 he issued what in effect was an edict of toleration, protecting existing church buildings and permitting freedom of worship. By 1705 there were probably more than two hundred thousand Chinese Christians, among them a few men of prominence.

Unfortunately, however, a prolonged dispute—the so-called Rites Controversy—arose among the missionaries. This had to do chiefly with the term to be used for the translation of the word God—whether the familiar *T'ien,* so frequent in Chinese literature, could be so employed—and with questions concerning the permissibility of participation by Christians in the customary Chinese rites in honor of ancestors and Confucius. If the word *Tien* could be used, and if these rites could be tolerated by the Church, then Christianity could be made to seem less inimical to Chinese institutions. If, on the other hand, the Church conscientiously felt that they must be forbidden to Christians, the faith would appear an enemy to traditional Chinese beliefs and practices and destructive of such fundamental bases of society and the state as the family and the Confucian school. Most of the Jesuits favored toleration, but many members of other missionary organizations vigorously opposed it. The controversy lasted for a little over a century—from about 1628 until the final papal decision, in 1742. Much of the ecclesiastical Roman Catholic world entered into the discussion. Jealousies between orders, rivalries among European nations, the Portuguese claim of the right to control the Church

in the Far East, and the rising tide of feeling in Europe against the Jesuits complicated the debate. The Pope finally decided against toleration and sent to China two different embassies (in 1704-1710 and 1719-1721), led respectively by Charles Maillard de Tournon and Jean Ambrose Charles Mezzabarba, in the attempt to gain the acquiescence not only of the Jesuits but of K'ang Hsi.

Before either legate arrived, K'ang Hsi had expressed his own conviction on the points at issue. This was for toleration and so was diametrically opposed to Rome. Both papal legates irritated him, especially the first. He felt that no foreigner, even though he